

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02

CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2637

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 0321

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EALR, ELAB, EGN, NZ

SUBJECT: UNEMPLOYMENT RISES SOME IN DECEMBER/JANUARY PERIOD

REF: 76 WELLINGTON 4134

1. ACCORDING TO THE LATEST STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF LABOR THE NUMBER OF PERSONS REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED INCREASED FROM 5,018 ON DECEMBER 17, 1976 TO 5,361 ON JANUARY 14, 1977. THE NUMBER ENGAGED ON SPECIAL (RELIEF) WORK FELL FROM 6,662 TO 6,309 BETWEEN THE TWO ABOVE DATES. THE TOTAL RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS ROSE FROM 2,198 TO 2,776. RECORDED VACANCIES FELL SLIGHTLY FROM 1,277 TO 1,182.

2. AN INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT IS NORMAL OVER THE CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR PERIOD. IT IS EXPECTED THAT ADDITIONAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE AFTER INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES STARTED OPENING IN MED-JANUARY.

3. SCHOOL LEAVERS ACCOUNTED FOR 743 OF THE TOTAL OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED ON JANUARY 14 (UP 40 OVER DECEMBER 17).

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4. NINE OF THE 22 EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS RECORDED DECREASES IN REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED. THE LARGEST DECREASES WERE IN HAMILTON, TOORUA AND LOWER HUTT AREAS. OF THE 13 DISTRICTS RECORDING INCREASES CHRISTCHURCH, AUCKLAND AND GISBORNE FIGURED PROMINENTLY.

5. COMMENT: THOUGH THE ABOVE FIGURES DON'T

DEMONSTRATE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE NATIONAL
UNEMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, IN A LEAST THE GREATER WELLINGTON
AREA MANY EMPLOYERS ARE COMPLAINING THAT MANY ADVERTIZED
OFFERS FOR EMPLOYMENT ARE GOING UNHEEDED. A STAFF WRITER
FOR A WELLINGTON PAPER, IN A LONG ARTICLE REPORTING
INTERVIEWS WITH BUSINESSMEN IN THE WELLINTON AREA,
REPORTED EMPLOYERS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY WORRIED
ABOUT THEIR INABILITY TO GET STAFF. ACCORDING TO THE
ARTICLE THE CONSENSUS AMONG A LARGE UMBER OF EMPLOYERS
IS THAT THE "SO-CALLED UNEMPLOYMENT EXPLOSION DOES NOT
EXIST". BUT ALL THIS COULD CHANGE AS THE 1977 ECONOMIC
SITUATION TAKES SHAPE. THE PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF PREDICTED
AN INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT IN 1977 (SEE WELLINGTON 0189).
THERE ARE GROWING PREDICTIONS AMONG INFORMED OBSERVERS
THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL SOON BE ANNOUNCING ADDITIONAL
ECONOMIC MEASURES (FINE TUNING) AIMED AT SLOWING
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND ENCOURAGING THE ACCELERATION OF
STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO CORRECT NZ'S FUNDAMENTAL DISEQUILIBRIUM.
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